DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Environmental Assessment

(Water Protection Bureau)

Name of Project: Frenchtown High School and Junior High School

Type of Project: Discharge residential strength wastewater to a subsurface drainfield under the Montana Ground Water Pollution Control System permit program

Location of Project: The site is situated in Section 34, T 15N, R 21W or North 47°, 01', 17" north latitude and 114°, 14', 32" west longitude in Missoula County

City/Town: Frenchtown **County:** Missoula

Description of Project: Discharge from the Frenchtown High School (FHS), and Junior High School (JHS), vocational building and football stadium facilities will consist of domestic wastewater. The wastewater treatment system servicing the FHS and JHS will be upgraded with: one 15,000 gallon; one 8,500 gallon and one 5,000 gallon septic tank, one 1,500 gallon and one 8,500 gallon dose tank. Discharge to state waters will be through a six zone drainfield located in the south western portion of the site. The wastewater treatment system servicing the vocational buildings and bleachers will be constructed with one 2,500 gallon septic tank, one 5,000 gallon septic tank, and one 2,000 gallon dosing tank. Engineering design reports submitted to the Department by the applicant indicated a design capacity of 12,480 gpd and 2,220 gpd for the FHS/JHS and Vocational building/bleachers respectively.

The anticipated permit will authorize discharge of residential wastewater to two (2) drainfields (Outfalls 001 and 002) which will then discharge to ground water. The drainfields servicing the FHS and JHS School shall be identified as Outfall 001. The drainfields servicing the vocational school and the bleachers shall be identified as Outfall 002. Outfall 001 will be located approximately 1.0- 2.0 feet below the ground surface. Outfall 001 is located at N 47º 01' 17" latitude and W 114º 14' 32" longitude situated in T 15N, R 21W, Section 34. Outfall 001 is hydraulically down-gradient, and on the southwest side of the FHS property. Outfall 002 will be located approximately 1.0- 2.0 feet below the ground surface. Outfall 002 is located at N 47º 01' 20" latitude and W 114º 14' 36" longitude situated in T 15N, R 21W, Section 34.Outfall 002 is up-gradient hydraulically and on the north west side of the FHS property.

Agency Action and Applicable Regulations: The proposed action is to issue an individual MGWPCS discharge permit to a residential strength wastewater treatment operation and specify effluent limitations, monitoring and discharge reporting requirements. The Montana Water Quality Act 75-5-101 *et seq.* Montana Ground Water Pollution Control System Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.30.10 *et seq*. and Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ARM 17.30.12 *et seq.*

Summary of Issues: The purpose of this action is to regulate the discharges of pollutants to state waters from the regulated facility. Issuance of an individual permit will require the facility to implement design and management practices to prevent pollution and degradation of groundwater. The action will have benefits to water quality.

Affected Environment & Impacts of the Proposed Project:

Y = Impacts may occur (explain under Potential Impacts). *Include frequency, duration (long or short term), magnitude, and context for any significant impacts identified. Reference other permit analyses when appropriate (ex: statement of basis). Address significant impacts related to substantive issues and concerns. Identify reasonable feasible mitigation measures (before and after) where significant impacts cannot be avoided and note any irreversible or irretrievable impacts. Include background information on affected environment if necessary to discussion.*

N = Not present or No Impact will likely occur. *Use negative declarations where appropriate (wetlands, T&E, Cultural Resources).*

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are soils present which are fragile, erosive, susceptible to compaction, or unstable? Are there unusual or unstable geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?	**[N]** Discharge will increase moisture in the vadose zone. There are no limiting layers present in the soil profile that would impede continued treatment of effluent discharged from the drainfield between the drainfield and ground water.
2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?	**[N]** Department developed numeric permit limits ensure that water quality standards will be met and there would be no water quality or nondegradation significance limit exceedances.
3. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been determined. Some dust may result during construction.
4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be significantly impacted? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified. Disturbed areas are to be covered with native soils and reseeded, without reseeding the native grasses may have a difficult time re-establishing themselves.
5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified. The closest surface water capable of supporting significant amounts of wildlife, fish and birds is the Clark Fork River, approximately 1 mile down gradient of the discharge

IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	location.
6. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Species of special concern?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA, however the Montana National Heritage Program reported that Canis lupus, Haliaeetus leucocephalus, Salvelinus confluentus, Eumeces skiltonianus, Lynx Canadensis, Wolffia Columbiana, Gulo gulo, Martes pennanti and Onocorhynchus clarki lewisi, do exist within the designated search local.
7. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA. The Montana State Historic Preservation Office reported a few structures over fifty years of age. They recommend at this time, a cultural resource inventory was unwarranted.
8. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified.
9. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? Will new or upgraded powerline or other energy source be needed)	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA. Hydraulic conductivity values indicate a rapid rate of groundwater movement. Ground water levels range from approximately 8-10 feet below the surface. Potential for ground water depletion is minimal.
10. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	**[N]** No, however if numeric effluent limits are not met, or the groundwater quality standards are exceeded at the edge of the mixing zone, effects could be seen in the down gradient surface water.

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT	
11. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified. There is potential for health and safety risks to arise during construction. With added vehicle traffic, there is potential for increased motor vehicle accidents.
12. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified.
13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create,	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified.

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT	
move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	
14. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified
15. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc.) be needed?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified EA. The facility is located off of rural roads and the increased activity is likely to increase traffic on these roads.
16. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA.
17. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA. Accesses remain unaltered
18. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	**[Y]** The wastewater treatment system is for the Frenchtown High School and Junior High School. As a result of this project the population is expected to increase.
19. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA.
20. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA.
21. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA
22(a). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: Are we regulating the use of private property under a regulatory statute adopted pursuant to the police power of the state? (Property management, grants of financial assistance, and the exercise of the power of eminent domain are not within this category.) If not, no further analysis is required.	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA
22(b). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: Is the agency proposing to deny the application or condition the approval in a way that restricts the use of the regulated person's private property? If not, no further analysis is required.	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA

IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT	
22(c). PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPACTS: If the answer to 21(b) is affirmative, does the agency have legal discretion to impose or not impose the proposed restriction or discretion as to how the restriction will be imposed? If not, no further analysis is required. If so, the agency must determine if there are alternatives that would reduce, minimize or eliminate the restriction on the use of private property, and analyze such alternatives. The agency must disclose the potential costs of identified restrictions.	**[N]** No significant impacts have been identified from the EA

23. **Description of and Impacts of other Alternatives Considered:**

A. No Action: Under the 'No Action' alternative the Department would not issue an individual ground water discharge permit under the Montana Ground Water Pollution Control System administrative rules. The proposed action will have environmental benefits compared to leaving the facility unpermitted.

B. Approval with modification: The Department has not identified any necessary modifications to grant approval.

24. **Summary of Magnitude and Significance of Potential Impacts:**
Impacts were assessed with the assumption that the permittee will comply with the terms and conditions of the permit. Violations of the permit could lead to significant adverse impacts to state waters. Violations of the permit are not an effect of the agency action, because the permit itself forbids such activities. However, the Department has taken steps to ensure that violations do not occur. The terms of the permit have been clarified and modified in response to comments from regulated parties, the public and other agencies. The Department provides assistance to applicants in understanding and implementing the requirements of the permit. The Department also conducts periodic inspections of permitted facilities, and identifies potential problems with design or management practices. If violations of the permit do occur, the Department will take appropriate action under the water quality act. Section 75-5-617, MCA. Enforcement sanctions for violations of the permit include injunctions, civil and administrative penalties, and cleanup orders.

25. **Cumulative Effects:** The issuance of this individual MGWPCS discharge permit would not have cumulative effects because the permit prohibits pollution and degradation of state waters.

26. **Preferred Action Alternative and Rationale**: The preferred action is to authorize the Frenchtown School District. under an individual MGWPCS Discharge Permit. This action is preferred because the permit program provides a regulatory mechanism for protecting and improving water quality by applying control technology to the source discharge of domestic wastes generated at the proposed wastewater treatment facility.

Recommendation for Further Environmental Analysis:

[ ] EIS [ ] More Detailed EA [**X**] No Further Analysis

Rationale for Recommendation:

27. Public Involvement: This draft EA will be posted on the Department web page: http://www.deq.state.mt.us/ea.asp. For copies of the draft EA or to submit comments, write or call the Montana Department of Environmental Quality c/o Dianne Beaman, P.O. Box 200901, Helena MT 59620-0901, telephone (406) 444-3080. Comments will be received for 30-days after the date of the signature below.

The Department maintains a list of persons who have expressed an interest in all environmental water quality related issues. The Department will send a copy of this document to all persons who have submitted their name, address, and telephone number to the Department for the purpose of being included on the water quality interested parties' mailing list.

28. Persons and agencies consulted in the preparation of this analysis:
Damon Murdo, Cultural Records Manager, Historical Preservation Society
Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Web site
Montana Fish and Wildlife Web page, animal species information
Natural Resource Information System, Montana State Library

EA Checklist Prepared By: Louis Volpe

Louis Volpe	September 16, 2008
(Name)	Date

EA Revisions and Corrections: As a result of comments received during the 30-day public comment period

Louis Volpe	

Approved By:

Jenny Chambers, Chief
Water Protection Bureau

Signature	Date